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Hopa Mountain hosts Native Leadership Program

Now in its ninth year, Hopa Mountain is accepting applications for Strengthening the Circle (STC), a Native Nonprofit Leadership Program. This training program is designed specifically for leaders of Native American nonprofit organizations and is cooperatively organized in partnership with Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples, Artemisia Associates, and Wolf-Star Productions.

The next STC gathering takes place March 30-April 2 in Bozeman. Applications are now being accepted from Native nonprofit executive directors and board members in Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon.

For more information, or to access the application, visit: www.hopamountain.org/StrengtheningTheCircle.php.

Montana artist receives Artist in Business Leadership Fellowship

Valerie Veis (Little Shell Tribe of the Chipewewa Cree) of Fairfield is among the artists receiving the 2015 Artist in Business Leadership Fellowship from the First Peoples Fund. The fellows represent mid-career artists who have demonstrated a commitment to pursue their art as a career.

Veis is a first-time Artist in Business Leadership fellow. Recently completing the MAC's Montana Artrepreneur Program, she has been a fixture on the Montana art scene for nearly two decades. Veis was born under the Big Sky, and spent her youth embracing the music, culture and art of the times.

Basketry wove its way into her heart at the tender age of 10, when she purchased her first basket at a small general store in a dusty little town. Her home is Montana's Rocky Mountain Front where she and her spouse have raised their two children.

"Inspiration abounds: colors melt from the earth and sky; structure is shaped from plants and animals; and, my basketry and painting reflect the surrounding prairies, mountains, streams and vast horizons," she writes on her website, www.montanabaskets.com. "My art is simple: much the way I view my life."

"The fellowship brings me closer to realizing my dream. It is such an incredible honor to be selected," she said from her home studio. "I am focused full-time on art and this fellowship will bring me closer to my goal of creating a sustainable business while contributing to the arts and culture of Montana."

With the fellowship, Veis plans to improve her website and to purchase equipment allowing her to reach a broader audience for her baskets and paintings.

"It allows me to independently travel and participate at regional exhibitions promoting my art while becoming self-sufficient as an artist," she concluded.

"This year's Artist in Business Leadership fellows come from all over the country, and bring a wide array of backgrounds to our organization and the communities we partner with," said Miranne Walker, First Peoples Fund program officer. "From traditional to contemporary arts, and wood carving, beadwork, and silk screening, they represent artists who are doing exciting, innovative work."



Paris Bread has crafted a short documentary about his mother, beadworker Jackie Bread.

Congrats to Paris Bread

Paris Bread (Blackfeet), a digital filmmaking student at The University of Montana, recently made a short documentary about his mother, renowned artist Jackie Bread. The documentary is a loving portrait of the influences, inspirations and cultural foundation of her intricate and astounding beadwork.

You can find the documentary online at: theaudienceawards.com/film/jackie-l-bread-blackfeet-artist8347.

NATIVE NEWS

Nominate a Native artist for the Community Spirit Award

The Community Spirit Awards is a national fellowship award for American Indian, Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian artists. First Peoples Fund chooses honorees for their commitment to sustaining the cultural values of native people.



Painter and basket-maker Valerie Veis (right), a graduate of MAC's Montana Artrepreneur Program, recently received an Artist in Business Leadership Fellowship from the First People's Fund. Her basketry (above) reflects the colors of the earth and sky that surround her.



The process of bringing spirit back to community is an important responsibility for artists – it is part of a sacred honor system. First Peoples Fund works to strengthen that honor system by recognizing these exceptional artists for knowing themselves, honoring others, and sustaining spirit in their own communities.

Nominees must be:

- Practicing artists of demonstrated maturity in their field;
- Continually practicing artists for a minimum of 10 years; and
- Documented affiliates of a United States tribe (Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian artists included).

Note: In addition to Visual Arts, First Peoples recognizes contemporary and traditional forms of Performing Arts and Literary Arts.

Fellowships will be awarded to artists who demonstrate:

- An artistic practice that passes on the traditions and the life ways of the people;
- A commitment to building the strength of native communities by sharing their skills and talents with others in their respective communities; and

- Deeply rooted and direct ties to their tribal community.

Nominate online at www.firstpeoplesfund.org or send a postcard with complete names and addresses of both nominee and nominator to P.O. Box 2977, Rapid City, SD 57709.

Nominated candidates must be from an American Indian community.

Deadline for nominations is July 1, 2015; applications will be mailed out after the nomination deadline has passed.

Montana Folk Festival accepting nominations for First Peoples' Market

Once again applications are being accepted for the eighth annual First Peoples' Market that takes place at the Montana Folk Festival, July 10-12 in Butte. Both deeply traditional crafts and more contemporary artistic expressions rooted in Native American experience will be featured in the market.

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for *State of the Arts*

Applicants must comply with the definition of "Indian Artisan" under the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990 by providing proof of enrollment as members of recognized Native American tribes.

A committee selects and invites artists based on a set of criteria that includes: quality, uniqueness, authenticity, connection to regional culture, and the artist's relationship with his or her community. The committee reviews all applications and selects vendors who best meet these criteria. Selected participants will be strongly encouraged to demonstrate, if appropriate and feasible.

Application deadline is April 30, and applications and guidelines are available at montanafolksfestival.com.

Montana Indian Business Alliance updating website

The Montana Indian Business Alliance (MIBA) is encouraging Indian businesses to update their directory information on the MIBA website (www.mibaonline.org).

It is MIBA's mission to promote private Indian businesses. The organization would like to make sure information on all Native-owned businesses on file is up to date so that these enterprises "can be listed, be connected and be noticed" on this free marketing tool, exclusive to Montana private Indian businesses.

Profit Mastery Workshops slated for Fort Peck and Fort Belknap reservations

Two-day workshops in Profit Mastery and Lending are slated for March 17-18 on the Fort Peck Reservation in Poplar and April 21-22 at Fort Belknap. Classes include a panel discussion on best practices in successful lending and an intense 16-hour session on Profit Mastery, which provides entrepreneurs with information on how best to maximize profits. Both workshops meet from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. daily and lunch is provided.

Montana Indian Business Alliance (MIBA), Opportunity Link, Inc., Fort Belknap Economic Development Corporation, Native American Development Corporation, Montana Department of Transportation, Bear Paw Development, Department of Commerce and other sponsors are hosting these workshops.

The hosts and sponsors are providing scholarships to Native-owned businesses that have been in business for at least two years to attend the workshop on the Fort Peck Reservation. The scholarship award of \$313 includes workshop training, materials and lunches. To apply, contact Montana Indian Business Alliance Executive Director Johnel Barcus at johnelb@mibaonline.org or 406-450-4822.

Opportunities for Native Americans

Native Language Preservation: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Native Language Preservation and Maintenance program provides funding for projects to support assessments of the status of the native languages in an established community.

Funding also includes the planning, designing, and implementing of native language curriculum and education projects to support a community's language preservation goals. Native American communities include American Indian tribes, Native Hawaiians, Alaskan Natives, and Native American Pacific Islanders.

Deadline is March 4; for more information visit www.acf.hhs.gov.

Peabody Essex Museum Native American Fellowship: The Peabody Essex Museum, located in Salem, MA, offers summer fellowship opportunities for graduate students and cultural professionals of Native American, Native Hawaiian or Alaska Native background. These paid, full-time, 10-week fellowships prepare participants for leadership positions in the museum field and/or the nonprofit cultural sector.

Deadline is ongoing; visit pem.org.